



# Texas Flute Society

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THE  
**newsletter.**

**Winter 2014**

*Carolyn Keyes, Editor*



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## Letter from the President

Greetings and Happy New Year! As we are all making our lists of things

we resolve to do or change in the New Year, the Texas Flute Society has made a few resolutions of its own.

We resolve to better serve our membership by providing a new membership fee scale including an opportunity for teachers and students to save on fees with a studio membership option. The benefits of membership include discounts on events, event announcements, and newsletters. For students looking to set themselves apart on college and job applications, membership in a nationally recognized organization such as the Texas Flute Society can help. All money collected from membership dues goes directly toward recitals, masterclasses, clinics, and the festival TFS sponsors every year. Read on for more details on the membership changes and links to the membership forms.

We resolve to better represent our membership. Our new, easy to navigate website helps the world learn about the Texas Flute Society and what we do. We are unveiling our new logo and color scheme to help make TFS an easily recognized brand.

We will continue to offer opportunities for our membership to perform and learn. This year's Members' Recital will take place on Saturday, April 4, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Six performers will be selected on a first come first serve basis. Teachers, professional performers, and adult amateurs are welcome to apply. Each performer may play a piece no longer than 10 minutes – accompanied or unaccompanied. TFS covers the cost of the venue and the accompanist, so there is no cost for the performer at all! Interested in performing? Contact Brittany DeLaVergne at [b.delavergne@yahoo.com](mailto:b.delavergne@yahoo.com) or 254-434-3889.

And, of course, we resolve to work hard to bring you the best Texas Flute Festival ever! For those of you interested in performing at the festival, keep reading for more information about the Myrna Brown and Donna Marie

Haire competitions and the masterclass competitions to perform for our guest artists, Bonita Boyd, Flutronix, and Kristyn Son.

I hope you all had a fantastic holiday break. May 2015 be our best year yet!

Best wishes,  
Lisa Phillips

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## **Upcoming Events!**

Shauna Thompson: TCU Faculty Recital, 1/12/15 @ 7:00 PM,  
Texas Christian University, Walsh Center for the Performing Arts

UTA Flute Weekend, Jan 16-17 2015  
University of Texas Arlington, Fine Arts Building

**[CLICK FOR MORE EVENTS](#)**

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## **2015 Texas Flute Society Fee Scale**

The dues for the Texas Flute Society are being raised this year to help offset the increase in the operating expenses of the organization. The new rates are shown in the table below. You will notice that the rates are now the same for all college students regardless of whether the student is an undergraduate or a graduate student. You will also notice that we are now offering discounts for studio memberships in an effort to lessen the impact of the increase on teachers and their students. The discount is \$5 per member which brings the discounted rates close to the old rates. We are hoping that this new membership option will increase the number of student members so that our goal to increase funding from memberships can still be realized.

	Old Rates	New Rates	Discounted Studio Rates
Teacher (college student)	10 and 25	20	15
Teacher (adult)	25	30	25
Teacher (sustaining)	35	45	45 (no discount)
Student (K-12)	10	15	10
College (undergrad and grad)	10 and 25	20	15
Adult	25	30	25

*Membership dues are effective for the current calendar year (Jan 2015-Dec 2015) and are now due. You may pay your dues for 2015 online by clicking one of the links below.*

[Individual Membership](#)

[Studio Membership](#)

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[Interview with Bonita Boyd](#)



*Photo by Kate Lemmon from bonitaboyd.com*

**"I have come to believe that the quality we call 'talent' might be the ability to allow our feelings to be known through music"**

*Bonita Boyd*

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**What got you involved in music? Why did you choose the flute?**

I started piano lessons at age 5 with my mom. She was a Ph.D. mathematician, but also a very good pianist. Later on in grade school, our family lived on the grounds of the VA Hospital near Chicago. The children were bused into a school that was rather economically depressed. The solution to keeping bored kids like me out of trouble was to have them play a band instrument. My mom thought that was unnecessary since "piano was enough" in her view, but she gave in. I then initially chose between baton and an instrument, then between accordion (!!!) and flute. Flute won since it was smaller - NO musical reason at all!

### **Who were your teachers?**

My first teacher (4th grade) was a freelancer in the Chicago area. Then we moved a couple of times. The next city was Columbia, South Carolina. At that time, there was no flute teacher in Columbia, so I studied with a clarinetist who was a fine musician and also the band director at the University of South Carolina - Robert Pritchard. I have *very* funny stories of how he sometimes told me to play. He said one lesson, "Flutists play with vibrato, so you should get one." So the next lesson I came in wobbling my chin to obtain vibrato. He said, "Oh no, you have to do it with the air!" Hilarious!

Then we moved to Cleveland, (now 6th grade for me), where I began studying with Maurice Sharp, principal flutist of the Cleveland Orchestra. He was a great musician. At this point, I considered piano to be my major instrument. I was playing concertos already and had a superb teacher at the Cleveland Institute Prep Department. I also went there every Saturday all day- had orchestra, theory, flute and piano lessons, and chorus.

Fortunately for flute, and unfortunately for piano, we moved to Long Beach, California when I began 9th grade. I didn't relate as well to my initial piano teacher out there, but began flute studies with Roger Stevens, whom I credit with my technical attainment on the flute. He was a truly great teacher. I continued to have flute and piano running together very strongly until I entered a young artist's competition on both instruments (the Liszt Piano Concerto and the Ibert Flute Concerto) and won first prize in flute but only third prize in piano. I began to receive many invitations to perform on flute, and my decision to go toward flute for a career happened rather naturally. I do still miss piano *very* much, particularly the repertoire. I have vowed that playing piano again and doing chamber music on piano would



be my retirement project someday.

Roger Stevens prepared me in such a fantastic way, and then sent me back to his teacher, Joseph Mariano. I didn't audition anywhere else, I simply did as Roger Stevens said! He was exactly right. He said upon my departure to Eastman, "You will not be any better flutist when you leave Eastman, but you will be a much better musician." Right again!

**What musician has had the largest influence on your playing?**

Joseph Mariano had a profound influence on me as an artist. He only listened to me play Bach and other generally slow music, seeking to develop color, tonal depth and variety, and all facets of artistry. He himself had been deeply influenced by an operatic and vocal approach to playing. He spoke always of simplicity, and like many of his students, I really didn't understand what he was talking about until I heard Rostropovitch (before his defection from the Soviet Union) perform the stunning slow movement from a Bach Cello Suite that we have in our 24 Bach Concert Studies book. It was a profound experience for me - I believe you could have set a metronome to his performance, and yet it was the freest performance of utter simplicity and transparency I could imagine! I just sat and said, "Oh! So *that* is what Mariano means!"

The other person who had a great influence on my music-making was David Zinman. I was blessed to have played under his baton for 15 years or so and then again more recently at Aspen. He is one of the great artists of our time. From him I learned that while the easiest tactic is to employ rhythmic rubato, the *greatest* tool is to get the same point across by use of color and nuance, thereby preserving the rhythmic *structure* of the music. I wouldn't trade my years of orchestral playing for anything!

**Who is your favorite composer?**

J.S. Bach and the Brahms "Requiem"

**What is your favorite piece to play from the flute repertoire and why?**

Hmm... I have several - Mozart, Poulenc, CPE Bach, JS Bach, Reinecke. I believe these are among the greatest [composers] for our instrument.

**You have had an incredibly diverse career spanning the orchestral, solo, chamber, and educational worlds. Do you have a favorite milieu?**

Yes, chamber music without question. The reason is that I can approach the greatest music making [by] reacting and creating with great musicians in a forum where the players have the control (as opposed to orchestra.) That being said, I also believe my work with my students is the most *important* work I do, because that directly influences the lives and artistry of the students I am lucky enough to work with.

**If you could identify the moment in your life when you knew that you wanted to be a professional musician, what would that moment be?**

I think it was in 4th grade when I chose music over acrobatics (I had wanted to be an acrobat in the circus at that point).

**What qualities do you think are most essential to musical excellence?**

I have come to believe that the quality we call "talent" (or natural musicality) might be the ability to allow our feelings to be known through music- the ability to not be inhibited or stiff. Everyone has deep feelings and convictions to express, but not everyone can *reveal* these through music. Therefore, musical excellence does involve this ability. Then there is what we often call the "ear." This would involve an innate sense of pitch, rhythm, nuance, etc. These are all a starting point. Then we must have discipline and the ability to persevere. This is related to emotional stability

and confidence in my experience. It is hard to endure being rejected at times in competition, and we must pick ourselves up and go on if we wish to be successful.

**Do you get nervous before a performance or a competition? What advice would you give to musicians who are nervous?**

Yes, quite often. I would call it agonizing before a performance, and might be related almost to a feeling of having “birthed” the performance. I do think it is a part of performance if we deeply care about conveying the finest artistic experience to our audience. It is important to realize that what we might call “nerves” is a creative energy that actually enhances the performance. What we want to avoid is the destructive facet of nerves. I advise taking care of ourselves physically as much as possible (eating well, being rested) so we are in the best shape possible when we walk on stage. Psychologically, we must realize that the audience is there to *enjoy* your performance, not to criticize it. Then there is the matter of our preparation. I once had a student remark after a great recital she had just played that she had discovered the cure for nerves: It was *practicing!* There is a lot of truth in that. It is imperative to be prepared to the utmost of our ability. Finally, I personally pray a lot! This takes the burden off of *me* and my *ego* and shifts it to giving God glory.

**What have you learned from music that has helped you in other areas of life?**

This is big. I think perhaps to make my pride and ego less important. As Bach said, “The final aim and reason for all music is nothing other than the glorification of God and the refreshment of the spirit.” To learn to trust when I walk out on stage and make myself vulnerable involves knowing that I have done my homework, and then giving over my need for recognition to giving something of myself to the audience and trusting God to help me play my best in the situation. This has helped me let go in other areas of my life and to be less self-consumed.

**What is the most valuable lesson the flute has taught you?**

Probably the same as above. To be less self-centered and self-consumed, to share the limelight with others, and to see that it is greater to give out what we have!

**If flute is your “first passion” in life, what is your second?**

I couldn't say that flute is my passion. *Music* is a great passion, but not first. In my life, God is first, then family, friends, students, and people in general, and finally, music as a great vehicle to bring joy to this world. Flute is my specific performance medium, [which is] important in that respect, but my life is not consumed by it - only enriched and blessed!

**What other interests or hobbies do you have outside of music?**

Other hobbies and interests: reading, sewing, cross-country skiing, cooking, entertaining, gardening, spending time with my sons.

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## 2015 Texas Flute Society Competitions

**The Texas Flute Society hosts three flute competitions each year as a part of its annual flute festival.**

The **Myrna W. Brown Artist Competition** is open to all flutists. **No age limit!** The winner of the competition will receive a \$1,200 cash prize and be invited to appear as a guest artist at the Texas Flute Festival the year following the competition. Second and Third Place Winners will be awarded \$500 and \$250 respectively. Entries must be submitted by February 15, 2015.

The **Donna Marie Haire Young Artist Competition** is open to all school age flutists who have not yet graduated from high school (or have graduated during the year of the competition). Winners will receive cash prizes to further their flute studies. The first and second place winners will be

awarded \$1000 and \$500, respectively. Entries must be submitted by March 1, 2015 11:59PM CST.

The **Masterclass Competition** provides an opportunity for flutists of all ages to perform for our Guest Artists. This year's competitions include a Junior High Masterclass, a High School Masterclass, and a College/Adult Masterclass. Entries must be submitted by March 1, 2015.

**For more information on entering the 2015 Myra Brown, Donna Marie Haire, or Masterclass Competitions including required repertoire and specific rules, [Click here.](#)**

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## 3 Simple Steps towards Peak Performance

*by Carolyn Keyes*

From managing a case of the shakes to improving concentration, flutists spend countless hours learning to perform their best when it really matters. Players on the competition or audition circuit often make major lifestyle changes or take medications to ensure that they can execute passages precisely under stress. While performance anxiety affects players of all levels, not everyone wishes to spend considerable time and resources addressing their nerves. Thankfully, some of the most effective exercises for achieving better performances are easy to do, require no special equipment or training, and can all be done in a few minutes or less.

1. **Relax and Center:** The increased excitement of a performance can lead to tight muscles and impaired technique. Keep yourself loose with the following exercise. Before a performance, sit in a comfortable upright position, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Begin by tightening all of muscles of the scalp and face for a few seconds. Take a deep breath in, and then exhale and release all of the tension. Continue with the neck and shoulders, the left arm, the right arm, and so on, until you have tensed and released all the

muscles of the body. Next, imagine a small, glowing sphere forming inside your body approximately 2 inches below your navel. With each breath, the sphere expands until it fills the entire room. Spend a few minutes breathing deeply in this state. If tension or shaking creeps in during a performance, release your muscles and return your attention to the spot below your navel.

2. **Focus:** Distractions are around us every day, but once adrenaline kicks in, something as small as a chair creaking can sound like an earthquake. Practicing concentration exercises on a regular basis is an excellent way to ensure that you can remain focused through even the most distracting environments. One well-known exercise is to choose an object and practice focusing on that object for a set amount of time. As your attention drifts, simply refocus on the object. The most important aspect of this exercise is not to maintain perfect concentration, but to be able to consistently return your concentration to the object without reaction or judgment. Begin with three or four minute sessions and gradually increase until you can focus for the length of the pieces you need to play. Alternately, you can take a more traditional meditative approach and keep your attention on your breath. This exercise is simple, but it can be *very difficult*, so be patient as you learn.
3. **Keep it in Perspective:** Finally, remember to keep the importance of a performance in perspective. To remind yourself that you are more than a single performance, try the “five finger exercise.” Press your thumb and index finger together and think of a time when you felt safe and loved. Next, press your thumb and middle finger together and think of a time when you did something good for someone else. Press your thumb and ring finger together and imagine a time when you were successful (it doesn’t have to be musical). Finally, press your thumb and pinky together and imagine

a time that you felt happy for any reason. This exercise is as potent as it is easy, particularly when done regularly.

Spending as little as 5 minutes on each of these exercises during your daily practice sessions and before performing can go a long way towards reaching your potential on stage.

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